Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue #1 Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC 8 May 2020

Pest Patrol Alerts

The information contained herein each week is available via text alerts that direct users to online recordings. I will update the short message weekly for at least as long as the newsletter runs. After a new message is posted, a text message is sent to alert users that I have recorded a new update. Users can subscribe for text message alerts for my updates in two easy steps. Step one: register by texting **pestpat7** to 97063. Step two: reply to the confirmation text you receive by texting the letter "y" to complete your registration. Pest Patrol Alerts are sponsored by Syngenta.

Updates on Twitter

When noteworthy events happen the in the field, I will be sending them out quickly via Twitter. If you want to follow those quick updates, follow me at @bugdocisin on Twitter.

News from Around the State

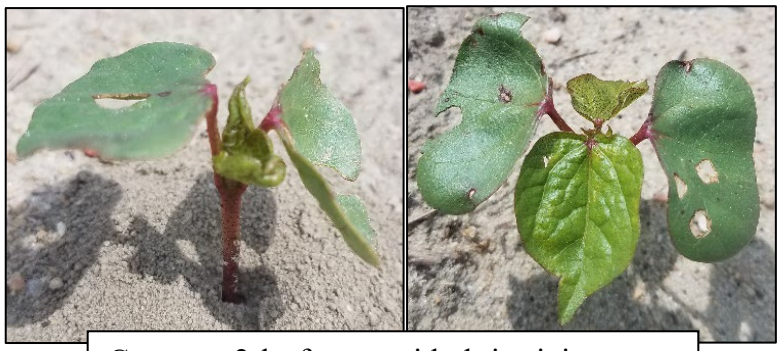
Charles Davis, county Ag agent in Calhoun County, reported that "cotton is just going in the ground here but there is some that is up, and wishing that it weren't. Saw a video from a week ago of thrips covering a white plastic pesticide container so I don't doubt that the danger is present. Other than that, I have seen a few hoppers along the ditch banks looking for a meal since the fields are now crispy. They will be looking to chew up some cotton next week."

Cotton Situation

As of 3 May 2020, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 11%% of the crop has been planted, compared with 3% at this time last week, 17% at this time last year, and 16% for the 5-year average. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages. The condition of the crop was not yet described, but what I have observed looks okay but not great. It has been too cold for cotton to do much growing. I have some very short 2-leaf cotton.

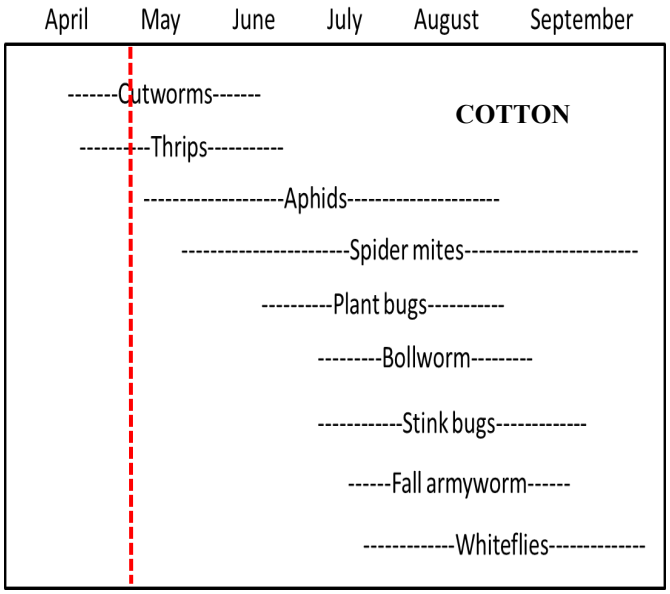
Cotton Insects

Any cotton that is up wishes it had the winter still clothes out. It is cold at night right now, so cotton is not growing well. The thrips infestation predictor for cotton tool (https://climate.ncsu.edu/cottonTIP) told us to not plant early in the southern portion of the state, but I did it anyway in my trials in an

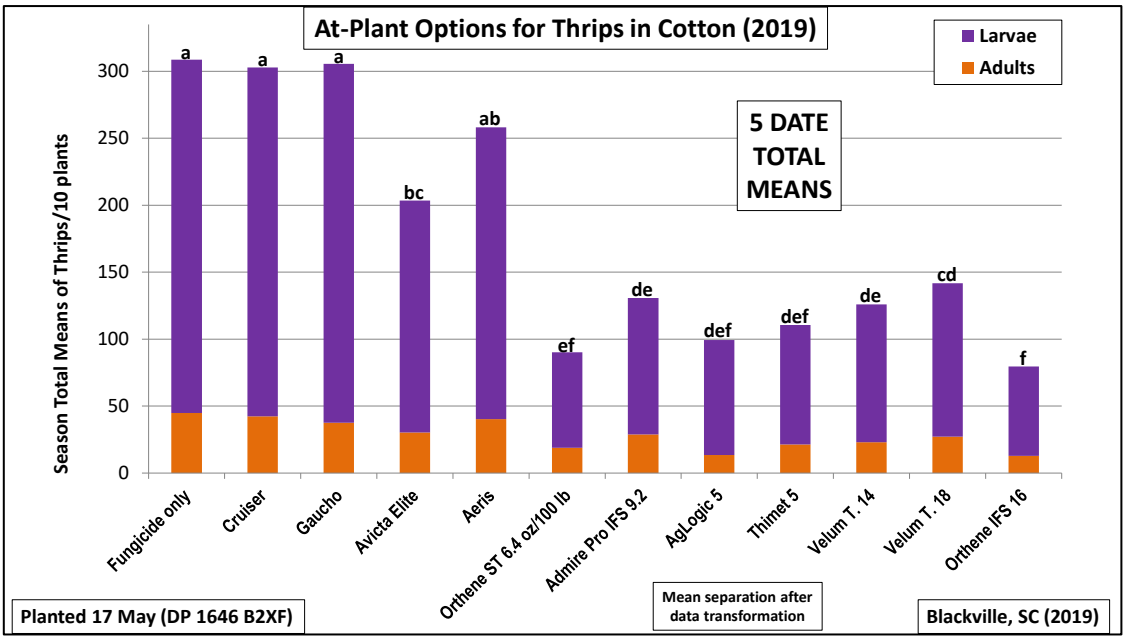


Cotton at 2-leaf stage with thrips injury
UTC on left and AgLogic 5 lb/acre on right

attempt to put some research cotton through the peak population of thrips. I am not sure if numbers of thrips will get as high as they got last year, but we are all set up for tons of injury in cotton planted mid-April. There are signs of injury, and we are picking up thrips in early counts. Many at-plant treatments are providing protection, but some don't look so good. Plots treated with aldicarb look the best right now (2-leaf stage), and I will report more about thrips control this season next week. Last year, all of the seed treatments, except for acephate, looked worse that all other at-plant options (figure below). Anything is better than nothing for thrips, but the seed treatments will likely break before the other treatments and require a foliar spray. We will talk about foliar sprays next week.



A well-known and respected consultant and I texted recently about grasshoppers hitting cotton as it emerges. Grasshoppers lay egg pods in the soil, and they can be dormant until right about now when nymphs hatch and emerge. Adults are difficult to control, but the pyrethroids and chlorpyrifos are good materials for adults. A colleague reminded me that the best material for the nymphs is Dimilin (2 fl oz/acre). This IGR will help break the cycle and prevent immatures from becoming adults. This material would be a good choice in fields you know will have issues with grasshoppers. Data support using this material, even if sprayed out on the dried residue at or just after planting. If you are spraying emerged cotton, I would consider a heavy rate of Orthene 97 for the grasshopper adults and control of thrips that might be an issue. You will get no control of thrips with a pyrethroid or Lorsban. Dimilin in the tank will help with the nymphs.

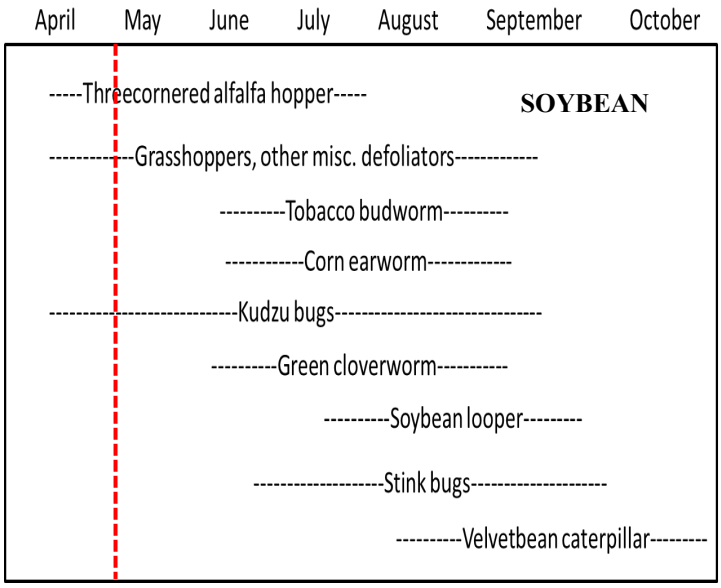


Soybean Situation

As of 3 May 2020, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 6% of the crop has been planted, compared with 0% the previous week, 3% at this time last year, and 3% for the 5-year average. The condition of the crop was not yet described, but very little has been planted. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Soybean Insects

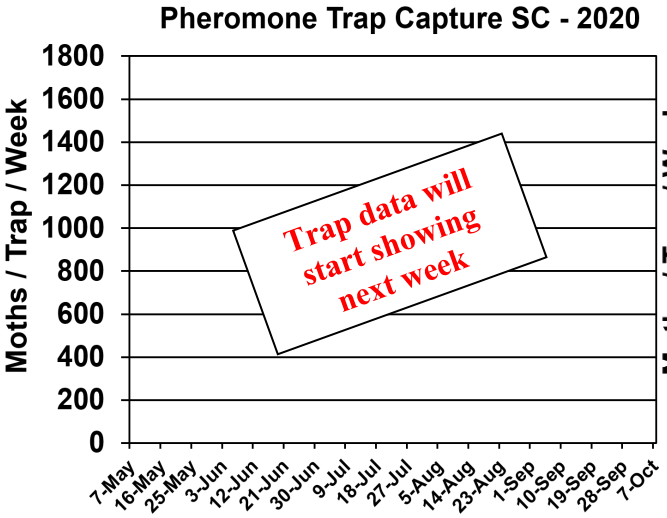
I have some soybeans emerged in a planting date study (photo below), and, so far, no 6-legged animals have found them. Because I have a fence around the test area early this year, the 4-legged animals have yet to taste them either. Pretty soon, we will likely see kudzu bugs and threecornered alfalfa hoppers are early season pests. Last year, kudzu bugs were the most numerous insect pests in soybeans. I am not sure why they were more numerous, but I suspect that the dry first half of the season had something to do with the natural fungal organism (*Beauveria bassiana*) that helps control kudzu bugs not doing well without moisture. We will see what happens this season. The same treatment for grasshoppers would apply in soybeans, with Dimilin for nymphs and breaking the cycle and a pyrethroid for the adults.

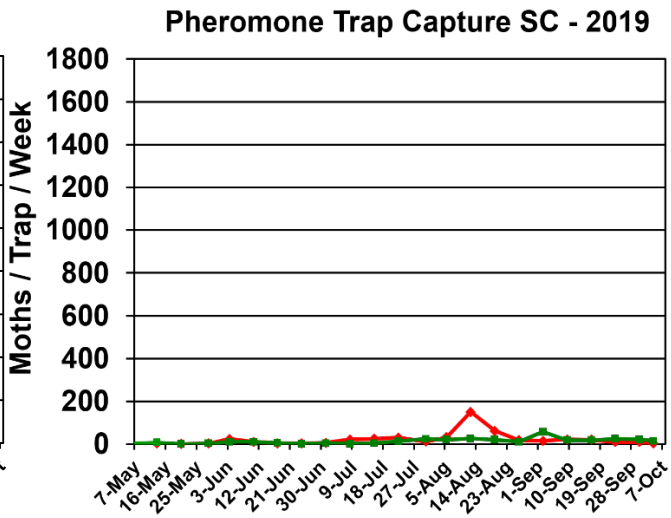


Don't forget to scout your young soybeans for insect problems early!

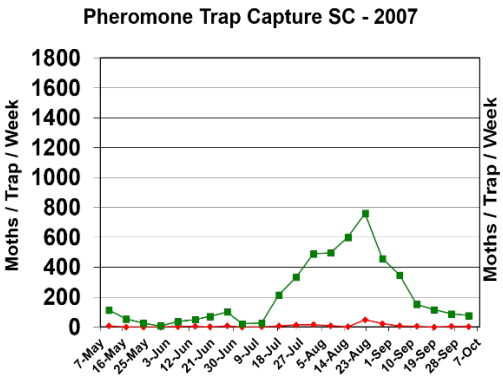
Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm

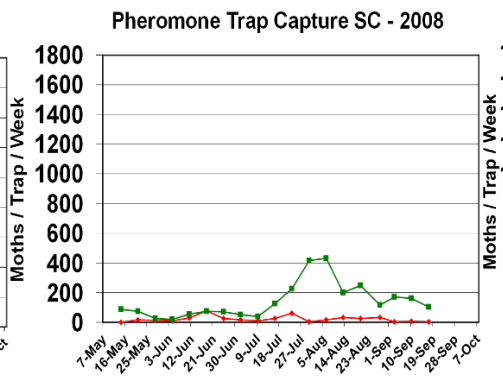
Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC this season are shown below, as are the captures from 2007-2019 for reference. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for any acres of non-Bt cotton. I provide these data as a measure of moth presence and activity in our local area near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state.

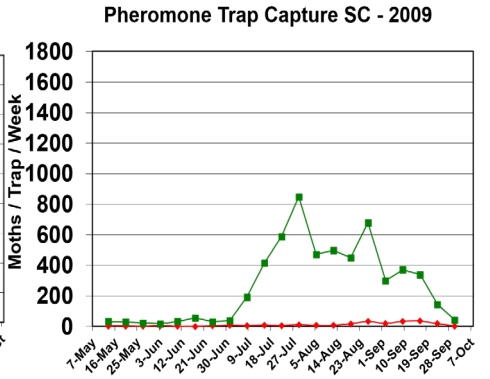


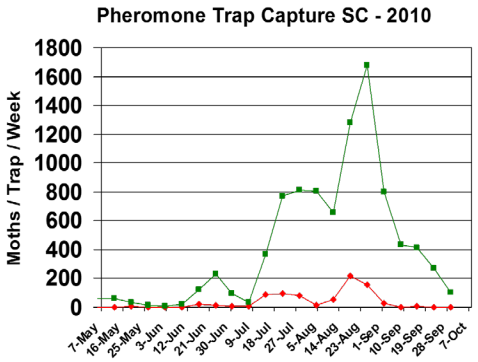


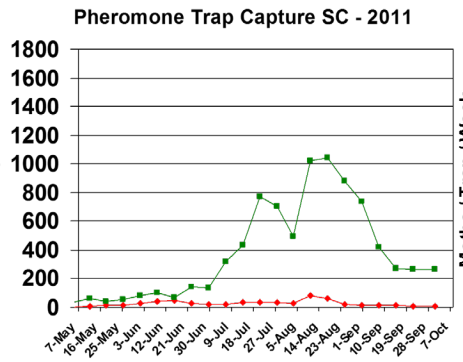
Trap data from 2007-2018 are shown below for reference to other years of trapping data from EREC:

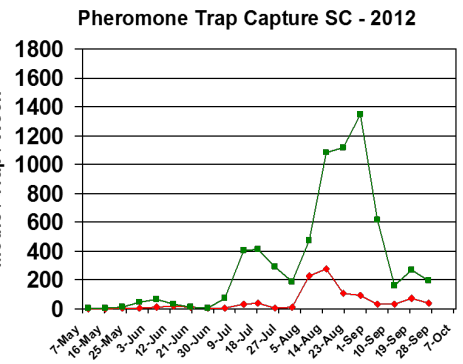


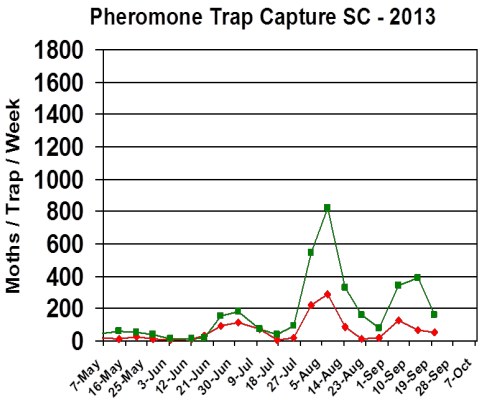


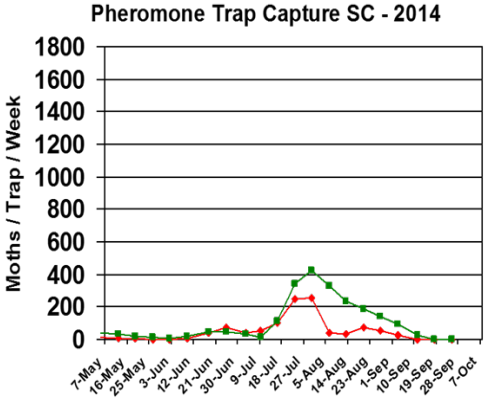


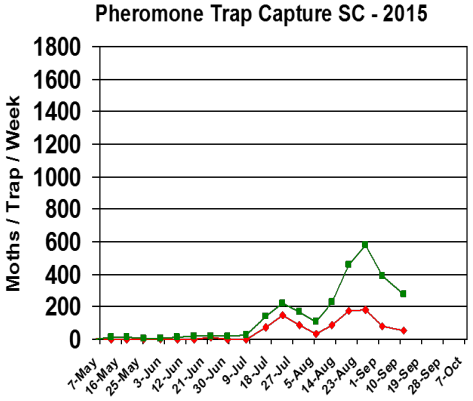


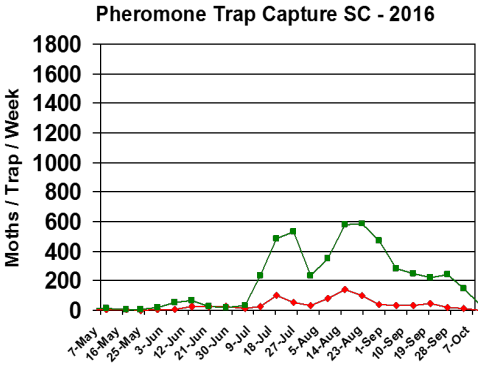


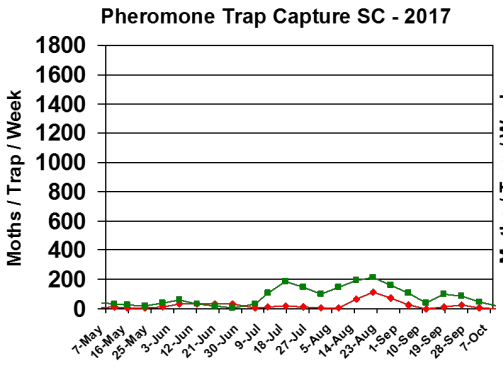


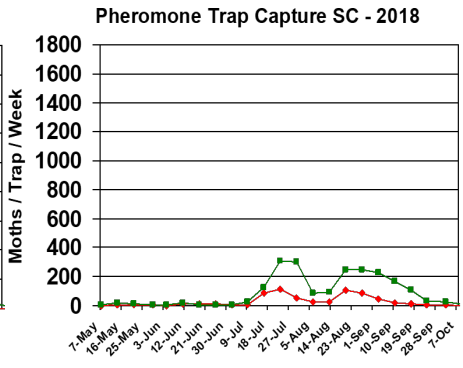








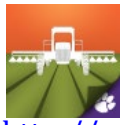




Pest Management Handbook – 2020

Insect control recommendations are available online in the 2020 South Carolina Pest Management Handbook at:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/pest%20management%20handbook.html

Free Mobile Apps: "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer"



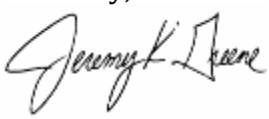
Download our free mobile apps called "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer" that help check for proper calibration of spraying equipment and help you with mixing user-defined pesticides, respectively, in custom units (available in both iOS and Android formats): http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mobile-apps/

Need More Information?

For more Clemson University Extension information: http://www.clemson.edu/extension/

For historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/cotton1/newsletters.html

Sincerely,



Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Professor of Entomology

Visit our website at:
http://www.clemson.edu